

DETAILED ACTION

- This action is responsive to the following communications: applicant's amendment filed 4/4/08 and authorized examiner's amendment dated 7/3/2008.
- Claims 1-8, 17-21 are now allowed; renumbered as claims 1-13. Claims 9-16 have been canceled via examiner's amendment.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Charles Gorenstein on 7/3/2008.

Please amend and cancel the following claims:

1. (Currently Amended) An ink-jet printer system, comprising:

a common ink-jet printer shared by a multiple number of host machines, the ink-jet printer being provided with storage means which stores a completion time instant of a last printing operation conducted based on a print request and print data issued by a host machine, the ink-jet printer providing printing end data to the host machine when the print request requested by the host machine has completed,

wherein, each host machine includes print control means for reading out a previously stored completion time instant from the ink-jet printer at the start of a printing operation, obtaining an inactive time by comparing the read out previously stored completion time instant with the current time, and selectively issuing an execution order of a recovery treatment to the ink-jet printer by comparing the obtained inactive time with a predetermined reference time period, and

wherein, the host machine provides the ink-jet printer with current time data, as an updated previously stored completion time instant, when the printing end data is received from the ink-jet printer, such that the updated previously stored completion time instant is acquired by any one of the multiple number of host machines that issues a new print request [I.] , and wherein if the completion time instant which was read from the ink-jet printer at the end of the last printing operation indicates a later time than the current time, the print control means informs that fact to other host machines and provides warning.

9-16. (Canceled).

Allowable Subject Matter

- Claims 1-8 & 17-21 are now allowed; renumbered as claims 1-13.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The cited prior arts (JP-2000076035 to Ogawa; US 5847726 to Hori; US 6078400 to Mizutani) of record teach an ink-jet system for printing and treatment recovery using measured completion time, but does not teach and/or suggest "the host machine provides the ink-jet printer with current time data, as an updated previously stored completion time instant, when the printing end data is received from the ink-jet printer, such that the updated previously stored completion time instant is acquired by any one of the multiple number of host machines that issues a new print request, and wherein if the completion time instant which was read from the ink-jet printer at the end of the last printing operation indicates a later time than the current time, the print control means informs that fact to other host machines and provides warning" and in combinations of other features as cited in independent claim 1. The examiner found neither prior art cited in its entirety, nor based on the prior art, found any motivation to combine any of prior arts that teaches the above limitations and in combinations of other features cited in claim 1.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to THIERRY L. PHAM whose telephone number is (571)272-7439. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (9:30 AM - 6:00 PM).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Edward Coles can be reached on (571)272-7402. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Thierry L Pham/
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/Edward L. Coles/

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2625